

Whims of the Idler

SOME GOOD GALLOWS' TIMBER.

"I do not love thee, Doctor Fell,
The reason why I know not tell;
But this alone I know full well,
I do not love thee, Doctor Fell."

On general principles, I am opposed to capital punishment, and there is nothing to my mind which seems more like a wart or callous spot on our modern civilization than that mighty engine of justice known as the gallows.

Still, inasmuch as Virginia juries within the last fortnight or so have sentenced at least four men to be hanged, I am in favor of taking advantage of opportunities, and would respectfully recommend that a score or more of chronic bachelors within the circle of my acquaintance be duly gibbeted and put out of business. Or, if that is not sufficient for the extermination of the breed, it is modestly suggested that they be drawn and quartered.

At any rate, let's get rid of 'em. It may be that when a public note is taken on this matter the writer of this very article will be one of the first to die, but be that as it may, he will perish in a good cause.

My old friend, Lord Chesterfield, (whose manners I so constantly imitate and from whom I learned not to eat with my knife), used to entertain pretty much the same ideas about bachelors as those which are here set forth. In one of those didactic letters with which he was wont to bombard his son, he quoted the verses given above, which are a translation of an epigram from Martial. And then he ventures the following additional translation of the original Latin: "O Sabidus, you are a very worthy, deserving man; you have a thousand good qualities, you have a great deal of learning; I esteem, I respect, but for the soul of me, I cannot love you, though I cannot particularly say why. You are not amiable; you have not the engaging smile of a child; you please no one; you are not graceful, and that address, which is absolutely necessary to please, though impossible to define. I cannot say that it is this or that particular thing that hinders me from loving you, it is the whole taken together, and upon the whole you are not agreeable."

And then Lord Chesterfield, who was full of human nature, winds up with an accurate description of a certain person, everywhere recognized to be his old enemy, Dr. Sam Johnson, who is characterized as a "respectable Hotentot." The Earl, who when divested of his title was known to his po-vine kin as Philip Dormer Stanhope, shows by the remarks quoted that he himself, like Dr. Johnson, was a "good hater," but plague my buttons if he wasn't a heap more generous than I would be. For my part, I haven't the generosity to say that there is a scintilla of good in the sort in a cold. All my senses are blunted when I am in the presence of this class of mortals. My one paramount emotion is a wild, almost irresistible desire to commit murder—to wade up to the ankles of my home-knit hosiery, in gore, and to see the nearest wall paper or gas lamp bespattered with smoking, quivering fragments of the objects of my aversion. Now it cannot be denied that there are some bachelors who make one drop—no drop—no drop—no drop—almost comfortable, influence much like a summer afternoon's sermon (not that preachers are ever boring, however), but this class, alas, is so limited that they might almost be regarded as luxuries. When they clutch one, the captive at least is not required to exert himself. All one has to do is to bear up bravely—to appear to be listening and to bide his time or escape. I could almost spend an hour with this species without having more than eight or ten attacks of the homicidal mania. And if seats or sofas or couches were available I believe some folks might almost be resigned while in the clutches of this particular human bachelordom. But, alas, has been intimated, this superior class of bachelors is pathetically rare.

A far commoner and much more harrowing type is the gossamer flend or the question-asking demon or the advice-giving mongrel, or worse still, the humorous pest, who gurgles and chuckles and cackles and titters and quivers with mirth at his own fancied fun-making, and would seek to transform your own frozen face into a grin. And you, the more you try to let the madder he's going to get, I've attempted it; I know. And so it is a wonder to me that the representatives of this class of bachelors are not brained every five or ten minutes, and that they are not one continuous round of autopsies over their remains. Yet they have hitherto escaped, wherefore I recommend the gallows.

But above all the tormenting critters in trousers and petticoats (yes, God save the mark, some of 'em wear petticoats), the limit, the maddening, exasperating limit, is the conventional bore, the individual who approximates Lord Chesterfield's description.

This class even defies criticism. When you retreat from their presence and mentally seek to consign them to perdition, you are enraged to find on reflection that there is no particular hook in their character on which you can hang your abuse.

They are like a nice circumspet dummy in a men's furnishing store or a beautiful, slim-waisted wax syph in a dry goods establishment. If in your sublime wrath you stop to consider that you are forced to reach the monstrously exasperating conclusion that their manners are even better than yours—that possibly other people would consider them much superior to yourself.

Now, the thought that anybody is superior to yourself is irritating, but the consciousness that an individual whom you dislike is to get the blue ribbon over you is positively torturous.

Of all the folks on earth from whom I pray the fates to give me a speedy deliverance, the natural, everyday, normal soul of the nondescript variety is the most to be abhorred. He is one of the monotonous of life—a sort of social seven

year's itch, which clings long and sticks closer than a brother.

You couldn't get him to do anything irregular. If he would only lie or steal or embezzle, or be peevish and insulting, or idiotic and brutish, you could stand him; but no, he ever goes the even tenor of his way, without so much as affording the world a second's excitement during his entire lifetime.

You know his whole programme in advance, nothing could do would surprise you. An attack with an axe or a base-ball bat would disturb his equanimity; he would be practical and rational in the face of an eruption of Mount Pelee; undisturbed if the footings of Gabriel's trunk were moving in his ears, and sensible and proper if a whole female seminary were to attempt to kiss him simultaneously.

His hair is cut just as it should be, neither too long nor too short; he always keeps reasonably well shaved. Without having his face either bristly or polished like a billiard ball; his clothes, though not of the extreme cut, are reasonably near the proper mode; his hands and feet are neither too large nor too small, nor are they fascinatingly ugly or attractively shapely.

His eyes are neither black nor brown, nor gray nor blue; his eyebrows are neither lemon colored nor darkly perturbed—neither beaming nor sooty. On every public question he takes a conservative view. He never makes an use of himself (none of us do that, however), and yet a brilliant utterance from his lips would throw you into convulsion fits or spasmodic convulsions.

In times of sorrow and distress he is decently sympathetic and much more correct and to the point in his methods of expression than thousands of blundering, tongue-tied mortals, yet he only adds to your trouble. If he facilitates you he does it in language which when written down would sound perfectly proper, but all the same you feel that his every syllable is trite—that his intended kindnesses are like the delicate attentions paid by an ogre to a kitten hole in a pine-wood plank.

In view of all these emotions engendered by the conventional bore, is it any wonder that you find yourself longing to be in at his finish? Laying aside all thoughts of revenge for the dullness he has injected into your life, you find yourself curious to know whether he will die in commonplace fashion—that is, without bringing a yawn to the mouths of those clustering around his deathbed. What ever doubts you may entertain as to his end, you know full well you can bear up under his loss. The very knowledge of the fact that he is on the same planet with you is an irritant, and this sense of irritation is increased by the offender's obvious love of your society.

Now, ordinarily, I am a dragon, or a minotaur, or a roving Bengal tiger, thirsting for the red juice of my fellow-mortals, but I fancy I could cheerfully attend the hanging of a few of the individuals described and be a veritable Sunny Jim when the drop fell. Nor could I, even once be due to my grotesque journalistic instincts, or to my innate love of sensations. For I would know at the start that the hanging of a conventional bore would be entirely lacking in exciting incidents and about as out-and-out as an affair as one could find. On the other hand, I would thank the officers for past courtesies; would express his entire faith in his hereafter, and would courteously assist in adjusting the black cap. And furthermore he would be pronounced dead in the prescribed time—not a minute sooner or later.

But alas and alack; also thunder—no, we cannot gibbet the bore or hear them sizzling and squirreling, and trying to the electric chair. Laterally and figuratively speaking, we have them with us always. They are fixed institutions—doubtless indispensable institutions. There are perhaps some who even regard them as civilization's sedatives and opiates. But I am not of this class. They make me cutting mad.

The only antidote for the evil is the society of the freakish—the company of people who are unconventional and fly in the face of the ordinary authorities of life. That is why I hunt up folks who let their hair grow long and who wear silk hats with brown sack coats. Anything to get out of the awful, humdrum, everyday existence, with its three meals and its stereotyped twaddle, and its virtuous surprise at those who dare to be original. If any three-headed lady who has a contempt for good manners and who does not mind wearing a white duck suit at this season, want a beau, I'm the fellow for him.

A Russian Courtship.
A curious custom, has just been celebrated at Kila, near Moscow. All the marriageable girls in the town are lined up in the principal street, decked out in their finest finery, many of them also having with them the stock of linen, household and personal, which forms part of their dowry. The young men, contemplating matrimony, then walked down the serried ranks of beauty as they moved toward the church and selected the girls of their choice. A formal visit to the parents to arrange details was then made in each case and a date fixed for the ceremony.

Royal Dairy Maid.
Wilhelmina, Queen of Holland, is making money by selling milk and butter. As a child Wilhelmina had a taste for the dairy, and, as a queen, she has not lost it. She has a dairy maid, and quite incidentally made pocket money out of it. Not long ago she bought for her royal wife several cows, which are placed on the rich land adjoining the palace. The natural, everyday, normal soul of the nondescript variety is the most to be abhorred. He is one of the monotonous of life—a sort of social seven

POEMS YOU OUGHT TO KNOW

Whatever your occupation may be, and however crowded your hours with affairs, do not fail to secure at least a few minutes every day for refreshment of your inner life with a bit of poetry.—Professor Charles Elliot Norton.

No. 399.

The Eve of Saint Agnes.

By KEATS.

The stanzas we print to-day describe the flight of Madeline and Porphyro from the grim castle, where, by stealth, Porphyro had gained entrance to Madeline's room while his enemies, her kinsfolk, caroused in the great hall below. How he wooed and won and fled with her are told in the unapproachable verses that follow. Keats's autograph, portrait and biographical sketch have already been printed in this series.

St. Agnes Eve is January 20th; her martyrdom occurred January 21st, 304 A. D.

FULL on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint;
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint;
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

And on her heart reviv'd her vespers' song,
Of all its wretched pearls her hair she freed;
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-dressed, like a mermaid in seaweed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly state,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplexed she lay,
Until the poppy warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away.
Flow'd like a thought, until the morrow-day:
Blissfully hushed both from joy and pain;
Clasped like a missal where swart Paynim pray:
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanch'd linen, smooth, and lavender'd,
While he from forth the closet brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With lull'd sweets, and the creamy curd,
And juicy orange, that with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferred
From Fez, and spiced dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon.

These delicacies he heaped with glowing hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright,
Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retired quiet of the night.
Filling the chilly room with perfume light.—
"And now my love, my seraph fair, awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall rove beside thee, so my soul doth ache."

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerve'd arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains:—'twas a midnight charm
Impossible to melt as ice and steam:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam;
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:
It seem'd he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes:
So mused awhile, entolled in woofed phantasies.

Awakened up, he took her hollow lure—
Tumultuous, and, in chords that tenderest be,
He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence called "La belle dame sans mercy":
Close to her ear touching the melody:
Where with disturbed, she uttered a soft moan:
He ceased—she panted quick—and suddenly
Her blue array'd eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
There was a painful change that nigh expelled
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep.
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many a sigh:
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;
Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous eye,
Fearing to move or speak, she looked so dreamingly.

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
Made tuneable with every sweetest now:
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear!
How changed thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!
Oh, leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go."

"Tis dark; quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:
'Tis this no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"
'Tis dark; the loed gusts still rave and beat:
'No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—
Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?
I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine:
Though thou forsakest a deceived thing;
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
Thy beauty's shield heart-shaped and vermeil dyed?
Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
After so many hours of toil and quest,
A famished pilgrim,—saved by miracle.
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest,
Sav'ing of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel."

"Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from fairy land,
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:
Arise—arise! the morning is at hand:
The bloated vassals will never heed:
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—
Drowned all in Rhinish and the sleepy mead!
Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps with ready spears—
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found,
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by each door;
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,
Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall!
Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide,
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy cowl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side.
The waken'd bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,
But his sagacious eye an instant eyed;
By one, and one the bolts full easy slide:
The chains lie silent on the footwork stones;
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

And they are gone! ay, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm.
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,
Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform'd:
The Headman, after thousand eyes told,
For aye unthought-for slept among his ashes cold.

This series began in The Times-Dispatch Sunday, October 1, 1904. One is published each day.

OUR STORES HEADQUARTERS FOR LOW PRICES



Well! You talk about saving money,
Just read this ad. We save you 25 per cent.
Hundreds of other articles on sale just as cheap.

Best American Granulated Sugar, 6c
per pound.
Best Quality Canned Tomatoes, 5c
for 100.
Seedless Raisins, per 5c
pound.
Fresh Country Eggs, per 20c
dozen.
California Evaporated Peas, 25c
two pounds for.
Fresh and Corned Hams, per 9c
pound.
Irish Potatoes, per 18c
peck.
Good Salt Pork, per 6c
pound.
Best Carolina Whole Grain Rice, 5c
per pound.
Early June Peas, in a can, or 25c
three for.
Mother's Oats per 9c
package.
Quaker and Chalmers' Gelatine, 15c
two for.
Clothes Lines, 5c
dozen.
Bird Seed, 25c
two pounds Mountain Roll But-
ter for.

N. C. Hog Herring, 15c a
dozen, or per half barrel, \$2.25
Oil Sardines, per 4c
box.
New Dates, one-pound package 5c
for.
Savory Beans or Peas, per 6c
quart.
Tomato Catsup and Sauce, 5c
per bottle.
Large Bottles Ammonia, 5c
for.
Worcester Sauce and Catsup, 12c
per bottle.
New Hawkeye Rolled Oats, per 7c
package.
Lark's Catch per 12c
dozen.
Three-String Brooms, 12c
for.
Star Home Made Mince Meat, per 6c
pound.
Preserves, home-made, put up 30c
in five-pound pails.
Two cakes Baking Chocolate 25c
for.
New Hominy and Grits, two 5c
pounds for.
New N. C. Cut Herring, 35c
dozen, or per barrel.
Best Canned Salmon, 8c
per can.
Good Rye Whiskey, \$1.50
gallon.
Silver King Minnesota Patent 38c
Flour, or per sack.
Cedar Tub, 20c, Cedar Buck-
ets, 12c.
Best New Crop New Orleans 40c
Masses per gallon.
French Candy, per 5c
pound.
Best Sugar Corn, four cans 25c
for.
Sweet Catawba and Blackberry 12c
Wine, 45c gallon, or quart.
Fresh Soda Crackers and Ghr-
ger Snaps, per pound, 4 1/2c
Timothy Hay, 80c
dressed.
Star Flakes Patent Family 36c
Flour \$6.75 barrel or bag.
Large July Lemons, per 12c
dozen.
Two California Raisins, 4c
dozen.
Condensed Milk, Daxar Brand 8c
for.

Best Imported Sour Kream, per 5c
quart.
California Lima Beans, four 25c
three to box.
Evaporated Nectarines, 10c
per quart jar.
Quart Jar Apple Butter, 10c
Jelly and Syrup, 10c
Sweet Mixed Pickles, per 10c
quart jar.
German Mustard, Mason 12c
Jars.
Postum and Grape-Nuts, per 12c
package.
Dunlop Best Patent Family 38c
Flour, 80c barrel, or per bag.
Good quality Lard, per 7c
pound.
Seven pounds New Vir-
ginia Buckwheat for.
Ham and Veal Loaf,
or 3 cans for.
1 lbs. Large Lump 25
Starch for.
3 cans California Apricots 25
Chopped Beef, 14 lb.
cans, 3 for.
Chewing Tobacco, Plum,
Fench, Reynolds', Sun-
cured and all popular
brands, 3 plugs for 8c
Best Cape Cod Cranberries, per 5c
quart.
Star Gelatine, best quality makes 5c
four pints of jelly.
Shredded Codfish, per 5c
pound.
Meal, best Dunlop, per peck 65c
17c, per bushel.
Seven pounds of New Prunes 25c
for.
Best Quality Jellies, only, per 3c
pound.
Whiskies, Gibson XXXX, or 75c
Mount Vernon, Old XXXX,
quart bottle.
Smithfield Hams, small, per 15c
pound.

S. ULLMAN'S SON, WHOLESALE AND RETAIL Grocer.

PERMITTANCES MUST ACCOMPANY ALL SHIPPING ORDERS. Our New Price List Mailed on Application.

GEO. W. ANDERSON & SONS

215 East Broad Street.

SPECIAL SALE OF LACE CURTAINS and PORTIERES.

Now is the time to buy, you will need them later.

ANDERSON'S

FOR

CARPETS

215 East Broad Street.

We Sell Best Quality



1103 W. Marshall St.

COAL, COKE and WOOD

Just received an extra fine lot of Indian River Navel Oranges. The finest ever received on this market. R. L. CHRISTIAN & CO.

CANCER HOSPITAL.

We want every man and woman in the United States to know what we are doing—we are curing Cancer, Tumors, and Chronic Sores, without the use of the knife and are induced by the Senate and Legislature of Virginia. If you are seeking a cure, come here and you will get it.

The Kellam Cancer Hospital, RICHMOND, VA.

PATENTS

Our Hand Book on Patents, Trade-Marks, etc., sent free. Patents procured through Munn & Co., positive free action in the Southern States.

MUNN & CO., 301 Broadway, N. Y. BRANCH OFFICE 188 E. Washington, D. C.

Vigorous Rubbing with the

CELEBRATED DIXIE NERVE and BONE LINIMENT

will cure Pains, Sprains, Strains and all Rheumatic Pains. Best on Earth for Man and Beast.

The genuine is sold everywhere for 25 cents for a large bottle. Trial size, 15 cents.

OWENS & MINOR DRUG CO.,

Richmond, - Virginia.

SPECIAL INTERESTING SALE. All Prices Cut in Half.

We have closed out the entire stock of Ladies' Tailored Suits and Cravante's Coats from a leading factory of New York, and this purchase will save you 50c on the dollar.

Ladies' Suits, former price \$20, now \$10.00.
Ladies' Suits, former price \$25, now \$12.50.
Ladies' Suits, former price \$30, now \$15.00.
Ladies' Suits, former price \$40, now \$20.00.

WEINBERG BROS.,

11 West Broad Street.

SPENCE,

THE TRUNK AND SHOE MAN,

has removed from the wrong side of Broad Street to the right side of Ninth Street,

Nos. 22 and 24.

PLUMBING SAFE, NEAT AND LASTING!

STOVES

OF Every Description. ALSO

Latrobes, Furnaces, &c. J. W. ANDERSON, 710 Main.

Our Reduction of Stock.

Before inventory, means that we will sell at unheard-of prices the following goods:

Fancy Lamps, Heating Stoves, Toilet Sets, Decorated Glass-ware, Teplitz Art Pottery.

The above statement is strictly a fact, as we intend to close out the above stocks. Leaky Roofs and Defective Plumbing Repaired and satisfaction guaranteed.

John H. Rose & Co.,

1427 East Main St.

Chronic Bronchitis and Catarrh of the



Bladder Cured in 48 hours. Superior to Copal, Cubells or Injections.

Floor Paints, Best Ready Mixed Paints, Waxing, Floor Wax, Brushes, Etc. TANNER PAINT AND OIL CO., 1419 E. Main Street, PHONE 24

LARGE PINK AND WHITE CARNATIONS

50 Cents Per Dozen.

HAMMOND'S, 107 E. Broad St. Richmond.